



# MEMA REPORTS

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MEMA REPORTS is a monthly newsletter produced by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to help keep the Public Safety Community of Massachusetts better informed about the day's Emergency Management issues. MEMA REPORTS also appears on the MEMA website: [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

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## **MEMA Responds to Hurricane Matthew**

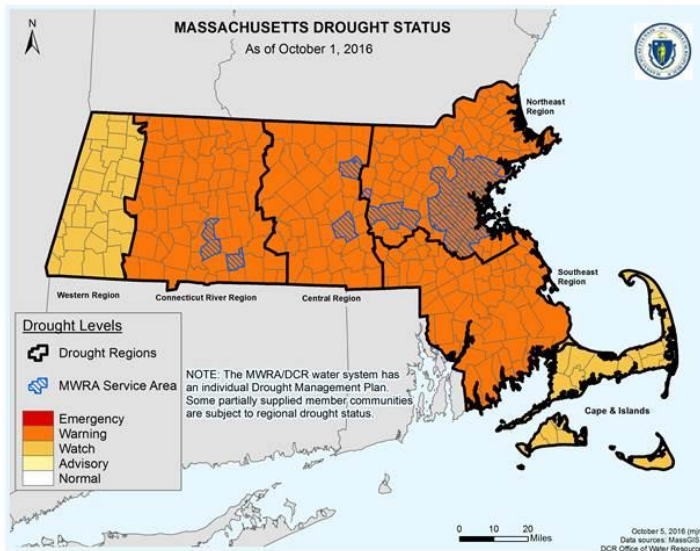
On October 5<sup>th</sup>, MEMA activated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to coordinate pre-landfall planning by approximately fourteen Specialized Mission Groups for a potential direct hit by Hurricane Matthew. The Specialized Mission Groups were staffed by Emergency Support Function (ESF) Team partners from numerous state and federal agencies and non-profit associations. At the time, forecasts from the National Hurricane Center included Massachusetts in Matthew's 5-day Cone of Uncertainty. Subsequent forecast shifts kept Matthew well south of New England, sparing Massachusetts from the impacts of the storm.

While Matthew did not directly impact Massachusetts, southeastern states (Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia) were hit hard by the hurricane and related torrential rainfall. Because of significant wind and flooding damage across these states, Massachusetts and many other states offered assistance through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). Two members of MEMA's staff, Allen Phillips and Rich LaTour, deployed to FEMA's Regional Response Coordination Center in Atlanta, Georgia on Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup> to serve as a Regional EMAC Liaison Team (RELT) for the impacted states. The RELT is responsible for working with the impacted states, and states offering assistance through EMAC, to ensure that mutual aid requests and offers are coordinated, and to minimize conflicts and unmet needs.

## **MEMA Monitors Post-Tropical Storm Hermine**

On September 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) at MEMA was activated to monitor post-tropical storm Hermine's progress, provide situational awareness to public safety partners, and coordinate assistance to cities and towns. MEMA staff and representatives from partner agencies including the Massachusetts State Police, Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Department of Public Utilities coordinated the state's response to Hermine from the SEOC. Thankfully, reports from communities indicated that the main impacts were isolated downed trees and scattered power outages.

## **Drought Warning, Watch, Advisory Issued**



Following seven continuous months of unusually dry weather, on October 7th, the Commonwealth's [Drought Management Task Force](#) announced a Drought Warning for the Connecticut River Valley, Central, Northeast, and Southeast Massachusetts, unchanged for the Central, Northeast and Southeast Regions, and up from a Drought Watch for the Connecticut River Valley in September; and a Drought Watch for the Cape and Islands and Western Massachusetts, up from a Drought Advisory for Western Massachusetts and unchanged for the Cape and Islands in September. The declarations, which were the result of recommendations by the Task Force which is comprised of state, federal and local officials and is led jointly by the Executive Office

of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and MEMA, will remain in effect until water levels return to normal in the affected regions.

The state continues to intensely monitor and assess the drought situation, and environmental and agricultural impacts, and asks the public to be mindful of the amount of water they are using, and to limit outdoor water use to ensure essential needs such as drinking water, fire protection, and crop hydration are being met. For additional details, go to <http://www.mass.gov/eea/pr-2016/drought-conditions-continue-for-large-portions-of-ma.html> or <http://www.mass.gov/eea/drought/>.

## **Drought Assistance Programs Available**

In response to the ongoing drought, several assistance programs have been made available to those impacted by the drought:

- **Massachusetts Drought Emergency Loan Fund** – The Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC) will provide loans to Massachusetts-based family farms and farm related businesses impacted by the drought. For more information, see: <http://www.massgcc.com/about/article/baker-polito-administration-launches-drought-emergency-loan-fund>.
- **USDA Natural Disaster Declaration** – Qualified farm operators impacted by the drought in all 14 Massachusetts counties are eligible for low interest emergency loans from USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). For more information, see: [https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/emergency-designations/2016/ed\\_2016\\_0922\\_rel\\_0120](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/emergency-designations/2016/ed_2016_0922_rel_0120).
- **Small Business Administration (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loans** - Farm-related and nonfarm-related entities that suffered financial losses as a direct result of the drought may be eligible for low interest loans from the SBA. This SBA program cannot provide disaster loans to agricultural producers, farmers, or ranchers. For more information, see: <https://www.sba.gov/offices/disaster/dfoce/resources/1543168>

## **Register For the 2016 Great Northeast Shakeout**

At 10:20 a.m. on October 20, 2016, millions of people will participate in the [Drop, Cover, and Hold On worldwide drill](#) to practice how to protect themselves if an earthquake occurs. You are invited to join them by participating in the 2016 *Great NorthEast ShakeOut!* Last year more than 43 million people were registered in *Great ShakeOut* earthquake drills worldwide. So far this year, over 19 million individuals have registered worldwide and over 200,000 have registered for this year's *Great NorthEast*

*ShakeOut*. Participating is a great way for your family or organization to be prepared to survive and recover quickly from large earthquakes. This is the fourth year that the Northeast states have been organized as an Official ShakeOut Region. FEMA and state emergency management agencies are coordinating recruitment across the entire region. More details can be found at <http://shakeout.org/northeast/>.

### **MEMA Supports the Big E Fair**

During the Big E Fair, which ran from September 16<sup>th</sup> to October 2<sup>nd</sup> in West Springfield, MEMA provided assistance in the fair's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and provided emergency preparedness materials in a public education display. MEMA brought communications capabilities and equipment to the EOC and provided staff to support the EOC with local and state public safety partners. Meanwhile, MEMA's booth in the Massachusetts building provided fair visitors a chance to play emergency preparedness trivia, pick up MEMA brochures and learn about emergency preparedness.



### **Authority of town moderator to recess and continue town meeting due to a weather-related or public safety emergency pursuant to MGL c. 39**

To assist local officials, MEMA is providing the following information regarding changes in town meetings due to weather-related or public safety emergencies. Pursuant to MGL c. 39, §10A, a Town Moderator is authorized, under certain limited circumstances, to recess and continue a town meeting without the need for formally convening a new meeting. The statute requires a determination by the Moderator that voters may be unable to attend a town meeting because of a weather-related or public safety emergency. The Moderator is required to consult with local public safety officials and members of the board of selectmen prior to declaring a recess and continuing the meeting. Below is an excerpt from MGL c. 39, §10A (a). The remainder of the fairly lengthy statute deals with the mechanics and specific requirements of how, when and where the meeting is continued.

**Section 10A. (a)** "Whenever the moderator determines that voters, or in a town having a representative town meeting form of government, the town meeting members, may be unable to attend a town meeting, called pursuant to a warrant issued pursuant to section 10, because of a weather-related or public safety emergency, the moderator shall consult with local public safety officials and members of the board of selectmen and then, upon the moderator's own declaration, the moderator shall recess and continue the town meeting to a time, date and place certain. A discussion to recess and continue a town meeting under this section shall not constitute a "deliberation", as defined by section 18 of chapter 30A, if the only subject of that discussion is the recess and continuance...."

"The moderator need not appear at the place of the town meeting to announce a declaration of recess and continuance. The moderator shall announce the declaration of recess and continuance as far in advance of the town meeting being continued as is practicable."

See MGL c. 39, §10A for full text of the applicable Massachusetts General Law: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleVII/Chapter39/Section10A>

### **MEMA Field Deployment Highlights**

During the month of September, MEMA utilized field assets and personnel to support the following events across the Commonwealth:

- September 2nd-5th: MEMA supported Ludlow's Our Lady of Fatima Festa with a Mobile Emergency Operations Center (MEOC), Mobile Communications Support Trailer (MCST) and cache radios. The assets enhanced communications and were utilized as a command post for the event.

- September 9th: MEMA supported Springfield during the National Basketball Hall of Fame Enshrinement with an MEOC and cache radios. The MEOC was utilized as a unified command post for the event.
- September 17th-18th: MEMA supported Canton during their New England Festy with an MEOC and cache radios. The MEOC was utilized as a command post for police, fire and CERT personnel during the event.
- September 18th: MEMA supported the Josh Billings Triathlon with an MEOC and cache radios. The MEOC was utilized by police, fire, EMS and CERT personnel during the event.
- September 22nd: MEMA showcased one of its two MEOCs at the BIG E on Massachusetts day.

### **MEMA Training Update**

During the month of September, MEMA's Training and Exercise Unit hosted 113 students in 3 courses:

- *ICS-100/NIMS-700 Incident Command System in Boston*
- *ICS-300 Incident Command System in Amesbury and Hingham*
- *AWR-325 Site Protection and Document Screening Techniques in Agawam*

To date in 2016, 1,623 students have taken 68 separate MEMA supported classes. For additional information about MEMA Training opportunities go to: [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

### **Latest Federal Disaster Assistance Totals for the 2015 Blizzard**

The Disaster and Snow Assistance process for local communities, state agencies, and eligible private non-profits for the January 26-28, 2015 Blizzard continues to advance. As of September 30, 2016, 997 Project Worksheets (PWs) have been obligated by FEMA, totaling more than \$66.3M in federal aid reimbursements to local communities, state agencies, and eligible private non-profits (75% of the \$87.9M eligible project costs).

### **MEMA'S Mission Statement**

MEMA is the state agency charged with ensuring the state is prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters, including natural hazards, accidents, deliberate attacks, and technological and infrastructure failures. MEMA is committed to an all hazards approach to emergency management. By building and sustaining effective partnerships with federal, state and local government agencies, and with the private sector - - individuals, families, non-profits, and businesses - - MEMA ensures the Commonwealth's ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating threats and hazards, enhancing preparedness, coordinating response operations, and strengthening our capacity to rebuild and recover.

### **Follow MEMA and Get Important Emergency Information**

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**YouTube** - [www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA](http://www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA); **MEMA Website** - [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema);

**Massachusetts Alerts app** - [www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp](http://www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp)

